



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

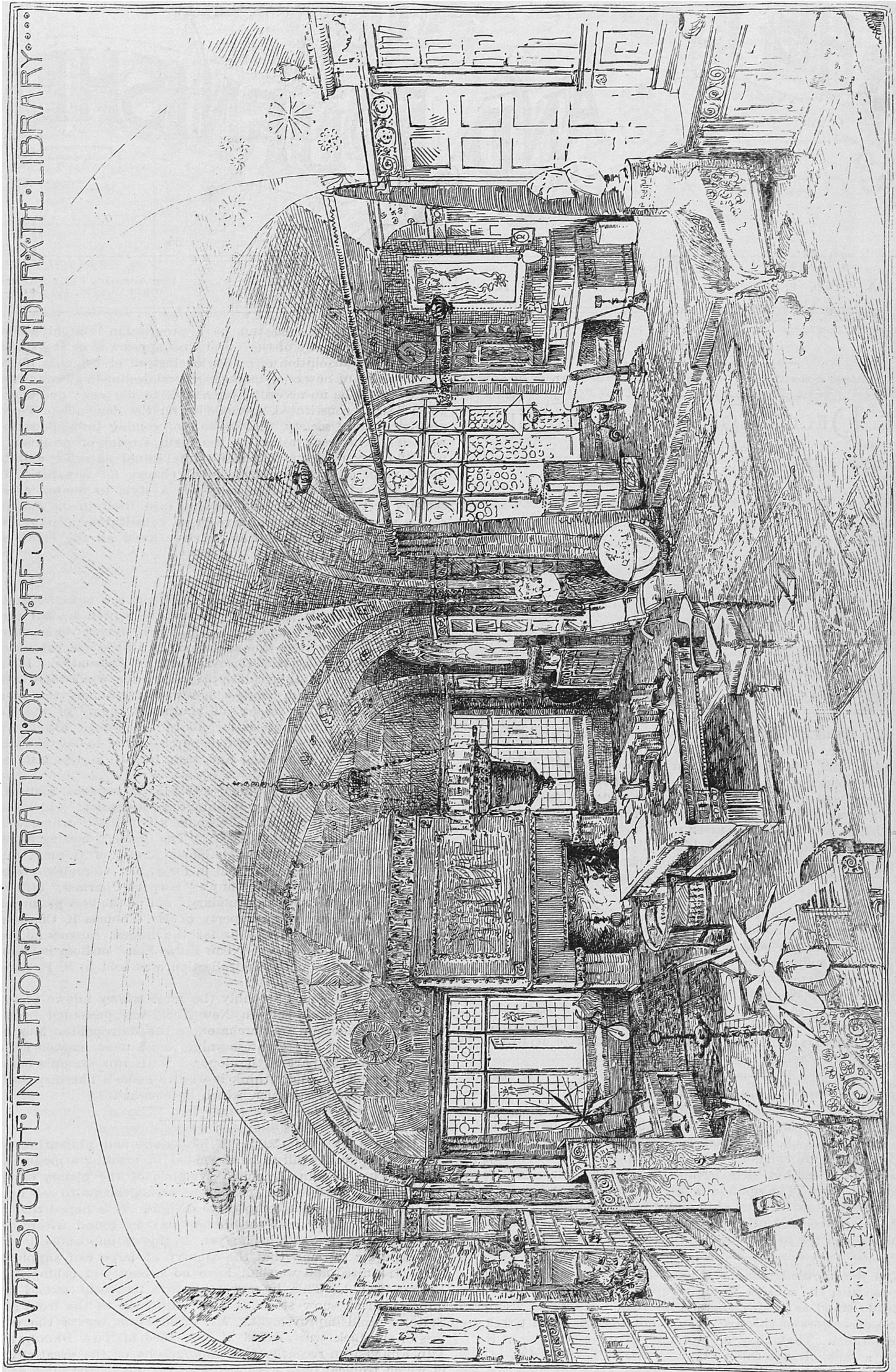
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



THE LIBRARY, DESIGNED BY RALPH A. CRAN. (SEE OPPOSITE PAGE).

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER

INTERIOR DECORATION OF CITY HOUSES.

BY RALPH A. CRAM.

THE LIBRARY. (SEE OPPOSITE PAGE).

OF course every city house has its library. The most vulgar and wealthy parvenue finds his house incomplete without his "library" stocked with books, purchased by his architect at so much a yard, but with such a room we have nothing to do, it lies without the scope of these studies. The house we are considering is that of a man of taste and thought, studious and cultivated as well as social and domestic. To such a man his library will seem the most precious possession, his noblest picture, his most mellow tapestry, his fairest art work, as well as his favorite books. In this house of ours the hall is for social and domestic intercourse, the drawing-room for society, but the library is for real quiet retirement, for study and rest.

For the use of the house the decoration may be light, artistic, varied, elaborate, gay even and superficial, but with the library this must change, and the forms here must be simple, the colors grave and low toned, the ornament pure and thoughtful. Delicate classical feeling is out of place. A library in pale colors and gold would be an anomaly. We want tone, a mellow evenness of effect, without bright lights and shadows, but rather a dim shadowy effect, that shall at once be useful and inspiring. We by no means justly appreciate the importance of the experimental, so far as the mental result is concerned. The very atmosphere of some deserted Italian monastery is conducive to meditation, the solemn glory of St. Marks works most genuine religious feeling. So in our library we must give all our attention to the labor of creating a fitting environment, producing a distinct mental impression that on the moment we enter we may be prejudiced in favor of thoughtfulness and quiet and meditation.

For by its very nature the library is a room of exceeding respect and dignity: entering it we come at once from the shallow frivolity and mercenary cant of the outer world, close among the greatest of earth, the men immortal; come closer to them than even in life, for here we can find all that was in them, all their truest nature, whereas in life we rarely touch, save from the outside. Of course we want books all over the house, cases of them in each room perhaps, for nothing takes away the barren, homeless look of a room so much as books, while their very presence removes the society and show character that taints so many rooms. Books we must have all over the house, but there are certain authors too precious for such rough and miscellaneous contact, and a dim quiet library is the place for them; the place also for the most treasured pictures and for the choicest possessions of all kinds that one may have.

What then should be the nature of library decoration? Well, first of all it should be by no means light or glaring; light of course there should be for reading, but bright light colors and sharp lights are out of place. Then the forms should be simple and large, the detail rich and full, but not crowded; not necessarily delicate. Solid woods, above all things, with no touch of veneering, graining or paint. The colors should be low in tone, mellow and rich; not too warm, but by no means cold. Painted glass, if possible, in the windows, a large open fire, and any light in the world except gas or electricity. Then heavy draperies, many rugs, chairs made to sit in comfortably, flowers in plenty and pictures. Again, no glass before the books; books are made to be read, and if their covers do get dull in time is there any harm done. Like wine books improve with age. Books behind glass are made to be looked at not to be read.

In the house whose decoration we are considering the library comes at the end of the suite of rooms on the main floor of the house. Coming from the great central hall, which is very high, the effect is that of entering a low and broad room, for in this case the ceiling is vaulted, a thing not always allowable. The general effect is dim, dark and warm. The woodwork is of oak, stained a dark olive, carved a little here and there; the floor is covered with rugs, mostly red brown in effect, with details of dull blue and green. The paneled ceiling is of rough plaster, greenish blue in color, but covered with large wheels and circles and flowers, partly in darker and lighter green and blue, partly in dead coppery gold. The chimney-piece is of dark green stone, carved. The warm effect in the room is given by the draperies, which are heavy and rich in color, shot with gold thread, and enlivened with gold. The furniture is varied in style and in wood, but always dark and massive, the upholstery being in strong rich colors. From the library opens the alcove study,

raised a single step, and richer and lighter in effect. Here the panels of the wainscot are filled with stamped leather, and the whorls and figures on the vaulting are of brighter gold and more numerous. Brass and copper lamps and vessels give the glow of light that is needed, and as the windows are filled with stained glass that is mostly faint yellow in color, the rooms are full of a warm low light. The effect as a whole is a little sombre but distinctly rich and warm.

RAG CARPETS.—

The passion for old-time things has brought into fashion the home-made rag carpet, but there are more artistic ways of having it woven than the everlasting stripe. A handsome carpet is a solid centre piece of maroon. The warp should be colored the same shade as the rags, and all may be colored at home if desirable for economy sake with diamond dyes, and to utilize both light and dark rags a very handsome border is made of shaded red and orange woven in the old-fashioned stripe. Another style is to have a very heavy warp used twice as thick as for ordinary carpet; color it several desired shades. This produces a very pretty checked carpet, weaving in the rags in stripes.

